

Smudges on the Soul: A Meditation for Ash Wednesday

Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the LORD, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing. (Joel 2:12-13, NRSV)

I would rather wear the smudge on my forehead than to admit its residence upon my soul. In a place where self-confidence is rewarded and any sign of weakness or emotional predisposition is held suspect, it is difficult to consider actually following the advice of the prophet to return to the Lord with fasting, with weeping and with mourning. It is, however, acceptable maybe even fashionable to appear in public with a dirty forehead as a sign that **I have religion**. It is amazing how the symbols of piety, sackcloth and ashes, have been transformed into mask that hides me from myself and circumvents the intent of Ash Wednesday.

Blow the trumpet in Zion, the prophet said. Not the trumpet that signals advance to war, or the trumpet that celebrates victory, but the one that warns trembling penitents that the day of the Lord is coming. Blow the trumpet that warns a penitent like me to wear the smudge of ashes long after her face has been washed and to admit the smudge on the one place that matters to God, her heart.

Blow the trumpet in Zion, the prophet said, and sanctify a fast (Joel 2:15). Hear the sounds of grumbling need in a world where few are filled and where we are overfilled. Today I am called to push away from the voracious consumption of everything in my path, for at least a little while, in hopes that I might realize something about the equitable distribution of the world's resources before the fast is over.

Rend your hearts and not your garments, the prophet said (Joel 2:13). The gift of the day is personal reflection, a season of confession, and change. Start the arduous journey from shadow to substance, from ritual to reality, from facade to faith. Today, choose the harder course. It is easier to buy new clothing than to mend a soul.

Prayer: Lord, as I begin this year's Lenten Journey, turn my attention to the things that matter most to you. Amen.

LECTIONARY FOR FEBRUARY

February 5

Isaiah 40:21-31; Psalm 47:1-11,20c
I Corinthians 9:16-23; Mark 1:29-39

February 12

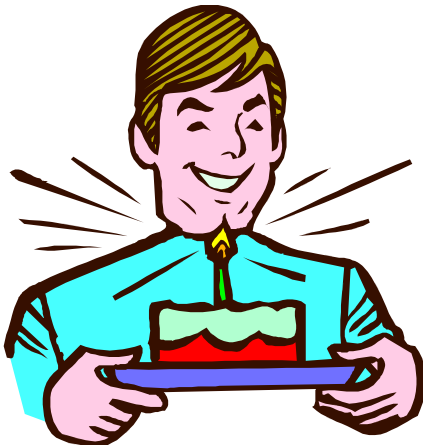
2 Kings 5:1-14; Psalm 30
I Corinthians 9:24-27; Mark 1:40-45

February 19

2 Kings 2:1-12; Psalm 50:1-6
2 Corinthians 4:3-6; Mark 9:2-9

February 28

Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25:1-10
1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15

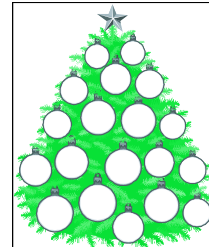


HAPPY FEBRUARY BIRTHDAY TO:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| <i>Bill Heinaman</i> | 5 |
| <i>Joanne Murphy</i> | 6 |
| <i>Thomas Henel</i> | 8 |
| <i>John Cammarata</i> | 13 |
| <i>Joseph Stamer</i> | 14 |
| <i>Alexander Mellor Henelsmith</i> | 18 |
| <i>Celina Faye Henelsmith</i> | 18 |
| <i>John Henel</i> | 19 |
| <i>Mark Halterman</i> | 20 |
| <i>Johnson Michael Tan</i> | 23 |

- | | |
|----------------------------|----|
| <i>James Stamer</i> | 24 |
| <i>Susan Henel</i> | 25 |
| <i>Walter Baldwin, Jr.</i> | 27 |

.....and many, many more!!!



Christmas angel tree

This year, all money donated to the angel tree at the rear of the sanctuary was donated to the united methodist homes.

*We thank everyone for their support and are pleased to report that \$105. was donated and has already been **FORWARDED** to THE Homes. **GOD BLESS OUR LOVED ONES AND ALL THOSE THAT HELPED THEM***



THANK YOU

On Wednesday, January 4th, the following gathered together to clean and straighten out Handley Hall (the hallway between the gym & sanctuary):

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| Gertrude Baldwin | Lorraine Carhart |
| Carolyn Franz | Doris Henel |
| Marie Dziamba | Ruth Schulte |

All Christmas decorations were put away and the Hall was completely emptied and rearranged. It is very neat and everything labeled. We hope to keep it that way. Thanks to all who helped!

CHRISTMAS CARDS

Each year we receive a number of Christmas cards addressed to the members of our church. Since not everyone has a chance to read them, we are listing the ones received below so that all will know that they are remembered at Christmastime:

Grace Lawson Hickman from California
Dave, Karen, Scott & Billy LeDuc – a lovely Christmas card & letter with the latest news.

Richard & Karen Brinckmann – Still missing everyone and write that some of the nicest people in the world are in our church.

Kathryn Gmitter with love & prayers
Mildred Ebert with love.

Ruth Schulte - Merry Christmas to all.

Lourdes Kozar – I miss & love you.

Faith & Dick Halterman – from Vermont

Jayne Cocco & Family & Charles Lamont – Merry Christmas to all.

Marie Dziamba – Happy New Year to all.

Charley Ettel – Wishing a happy holiday.

Leona Parker – Let the miracle of Christmas fill your heart with warmth and love.

Carolyn Franz - Merry Christmas & a happy new year. God bless you all.

Caroline & Tom Long – a lovely picture with greetings of great Joy.

George & Florence Fedeles – from N.C.- To our friends in the UMC of Linden. We miss you all and bless you with the love, Comfort and strength that only our Lord can provide.

Ethel Steiniger – Merry Christmas & Happy New Year.

Doris Henel – Merry Christmas – May your dreams come true.

Bob & Lorraine Carhart & Family - Seasons Greetings.

Joyce & Norman Carhart – Happy Holidays.

A POEM RECEIVED FROM KAREN & RICHARD BRINCKMANN

*May God grant you always...
A sunbeam to warm you,
A moonbeam to charm you,
A sheltering Angel so
nothing can harm you.
Laughter to cheer you,
Faithful friends near you.
And whenever you pray,
Heaven to hear you.*

THE ADDRESS & PHONE NUMBER OF FLORENCE & GEORGE FEDELES

*1056 Mainsail Ct.
Calabash, N. C. 28467
Tel. No. 910-575-4333*

Both of the above were received on the Christmas cards sent to the church.



TREASURER'S BOOKS TO BE AUDITED

The following treasurer's books must be audited and should be turned over to Doris Henel immediately.

KATHIE HORSCH – Current Expense

BOB CARHART – Bldg.Improvement Fund

LEONA PARKER – Memorial Fund

NORMAN CARHART – Endowment Fund

MARYJANE KOSLOSKY – Scholarship Fund

The books will be sent to Rev. Charles Miller as soon as possible since he is extremely busy as we approach tax time. Please see that they are given to Doris Henel right away.



We were saddened to hear of the death of Russell Lyles, Sr. on Christmas Eve, Dec. 24, 2011 at The Village at Woods Edge in Franklin, Va. Russ, his wife, Nellie, and son, Rusty, were long-time members of our church until he retired and they returned to their hometown in Roanoke Rapids, N. C. They were very happy there, and always looked forward to the yearly visit from Doris Henel, Betty Lamont, Norma Mac Alpine and Bobbie Bogard.

As they aged and had health problems they moved to The Village where they

had a lovely apartment and made many new friends. Doris Henel, Bobbie Bogard, and her daughter, Robin, continued to visit them and last saw them in Sept. Russ served in the U.S. Army, U. S. Coast Guard and World War II. He retired as a railroad engineer with the Pennsylvania Railroad after 31 yrs. He was active in the Rosemary UMC in Roanoke Rapids and was a member of Azure-Masada Masonic Lodge in Cranford, N.J. for 76 years. He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Nellie, son Russell Harvey Lyles, II and wife, Eddi of Murfreesboro, N.C., two granddaughters, two great-grandchildren one sister, and three brothers.

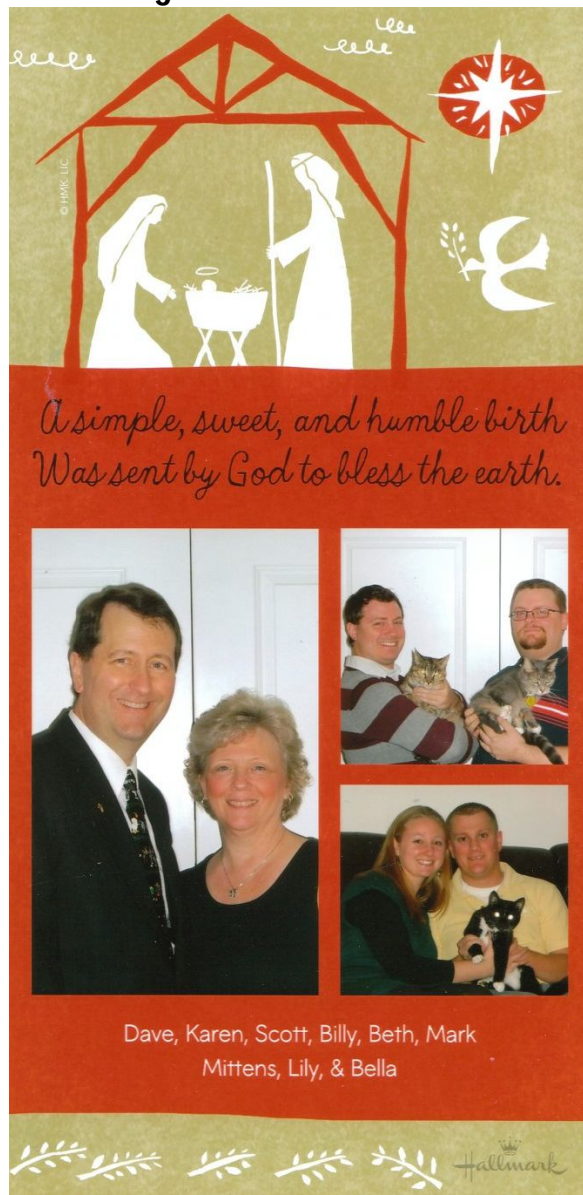
Services were held at Rosemary U.M.C. in Roanoke Rapids with Rev. Sue Owens officiating. Burial was in Cedarwood Cemetery.

Russ will be missed by his loving family and his many friends, both in N.C., Va. right here in our church and other friends in Linden and beyond. He was a great husband, father, grandfather and friend!





These are two of the pictures received with the Christmas cards.
TOP – Tom & Caroline Long **BOTTOM – The Rev. David LeDuc Family**



CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS – 2011

We dedicate the Christmas poinsettias to the “Glory of God in Honor or Memory of our loved ones. Thank you for allowing us to enjoy them. You may pick up your plants after the Christmas Eve Service...

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Loved Ones by Grace Hickman
Fred Gmitter by his wife, Kathryn
Randy & Cheryl Gmitter, by Kathryn Gmitter
Husband, Victorino, by his wife Ida Peralta
Loved Ones by Doris Stamer
Albert Henel, by his wife, Doris
Robert & Mary Dalziel by MaryJane Koslosky &
Kathy Curtin
George Koslosky by MaryJane Koslosky & Kathy
Curtin
Loved Ones by Ruth Schulte
Loved Ones by Gertrude Baldwin
Husband, George Barnes, by his wife, Mary
Loved Ones by Leona Parker
Ralph Horsch, Sr. by the Horsch Family
Irene & Frederick Messenger by Lorraine & Bob
Carhart
Gertrude Blasi & Son, Jeffrey Blasi, by Bob &
Lorraine Carhart
William & Bessi Scheiderman, by Lorraine & Bob
Carhart
Mary Carhart, & Gregg Carhart, by Bob &
Lorraine Carhart
Our Loved Ones by Gertrude & Mickey Kiely
Caitlin Elizabeth Russell by Dorothy & Richard
Gerbounka
Caitlin Elizabeth Russell by Dorothy & Richard
Gerbounka
Betty Lamont & Gertrude Lamont by Charles
Lamont & Jayne Cocco
Michael Hinko by Joy Hinko & Family

IN HONOR OF

Rev. Ramos & my Church Family by Mary
Barnes
Donna, Diane, Allyson by Lorraine & Bob
Carhart
Serophus & Hilda Pagano by Ida Peralta
Given by the Forster Family

(This is the list of the poinsettias we received in memory or honor of loved ones for Christmas. They were all beautiful and we thank everyone for sharing them with us.)

BITS AND PIECES

We received a lovely letter from Bill Heinaman enclosing a check for \$50.94 for the sale of some of the items from Mrs. Leary's estate. He reminded us that he had taken a few of the items that did not sell at the time, thinking he could get a better price than putting them in the rummage sale or white elephant. He recently sold two items and, after his commission, sent us the balance. Thanks so much, Bill. We really had forgotten about the items, and it was very nice of you to remind us. It was appreciated. Bill said that he and Theresa are very lucky in belonging to a small church with members that are caring and very helpful to them when they have a need. We think of Bill and Theresa often and he also said they miss the good old days quite frequently.

Doris Henel entertained the United Methodist Women at a luncheon on Tuesday, Jan. 3rd and they were also pleased to have Rev. Ramos attend. The money raised was turned over to the U.M.W. along with the balance raised from the sale of 2-year calendars. The budget was approved, pledging \$50. monthly to the church and \$150. to the Mission program of the U.M.W. Gifts to the U.M. Hospital, U.M. Homes, etc. are usually given the end of each year.

The next meeting is February 7th at 11:30 a.m. in Aldersgate Hall. All women are invited – bring a sandwich and beverage will be served.

Ethel Bethea celebrated her 102nd birthday in October. When Ethel lived in our area she was very active in our church and we have missed her since she moved away. Keep going, Ethel – 103 and beyond. You have a strong faith and still have much to give to your friends!

Beatrice Bradford will be leaving for Ghana the end of the month to spend some time with her husband. We hope the time will come when he will come here to stay. I'm sure Beatrice hopes that happens, too!



Vivienne Merrill on the right and her daughter, Diane

Vivienne is now living at 473 DeMott Lane, Room 217, Somerset, N. J. 08873 in a nursing home not far from her daughter's home. It is a lovely place and in this picture Diane is holding her mother's dog, and Vivienne has Diane's dog. They are both great dog lovers!

We are pleased to see how well Vivienne looks and plans will be made for the United Methodist Women to visit her in the spring. She was an active member of the organization when her health was better and she still lived in Linden.

PLEASE MAKE THE FOLLOWING CORRECTION IN THE CHURCH TELEPHONE AND ADDRESS LIST:

Thomas Henel – His Email address is:
tomhenel28@aol.com

PLEASE MAKE THIS CORRECTION ON YOUR NEW LIST.



We were saddened to hear of the death of Bill Werson, who established the Werson Funeral Home in Linden many years ago. He was always a good friend of our church and many of our members.

The funeral was private and a Memorial Service will be announced in the near future.

We extend our deepest sympathy to his wife Ann, his two daughters, and their husbands and grandchildren.

He will be missed by his loving family and many friends.

It seems like Jayne and Otts Schnellenberger are hardly ever home in Kentucky. They enjoy traveling and this winter are spending two months in the sunny south rather than putting up with a cold winter.

Jayne's brother, Steven Zahorbenski and his family, and aunt, Gertrude Baldwin and her family, are looking forward to a visit from them during the Easter holidays.

ANOTHER CHANGE OF ADDRESS ON OUR TELEPHONE AND MAILING ADDRESS LIST AS FOLLOWS:

Cathy Truppo – 439 Helen Street, Linden, N.J.07036
PLEASE MAKE THE CHANGE ON YOUR NEW LIST

A SPECIAL NOTICE TO OUR ADVERTISERS AND PREVIOUS MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF OUR CHURCH.

We have always been happy to have the support of those people who advertise in our Messenger and also pleased to still send the newsletter to previous members and friends of our church that have requested it. Some are still associate members of the UMC of Linden and we are thankful to still have that connection.

For many years, all of the above made a donation to the church to help cover the costs involved in mailing the Messenger. For the last three years, we have not asked for any donation.

We have been happy to continue sending the newsletter to our friends and advertisers because you are all important to us and we appreciate your previous support.

The economy over the past few years has been difficult for many people and we wanted to do our part in supporting our friends and advertisers who have been so faithful to us. It also has become much more efficient and cheaper to mail so many of the Messengers through Email addresses.

We hope you continue to enjoy the Messenger, and we are not requesting any donations to support the paper. This is our gift to you for your continued interest in the United Methodist Church of Linden.

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***JUDGING FROM STTISTICS –
 "Front seat drivers aren't so smart
 either!"***

FEBRUARY 2012

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 4:30-9:30-Fencing School	2 4:30-9:30-Fencing Sch	3	4 9:30-1:30 Fencing School
5 9 AM - Choir 10:30 - Worship 10:30-Sunday Sch.	6 7 – Board of Trustees (D.Beyer,T.Henel,B.Losyk J.Stamer,C.Ettel,W.Hanns G.Baldwin) 4:30 – 9:30 Fencing Sch.	7 10:30-Bible Study in Youth Room 12 Noon-United Meth. Women-bring sandwich 4:30-Weight Watchers 4:30 -9:30 Fencing Sch.	8 4:30-9:30 – Fencing School	9 4:30-9:30-Fencing School	10	11 9:30-1:30 – Fencing School in gym
12 9 AM - Choir 10:30 - Worship 10:30 -Sunday Sch	13 4:30-9:30-Fencing School	14 10:30-Bible Study 4:30-6:30-Weight Watchers in Aldersgate Hall 4:30-9:30-Fencing Sch	15 . 4:30-9:30-Fenc.Sch.	16 4:30-9:30-Fenc.Sch	17	18 9:30-1:30-Fencing School in gym
19 9 AM – Choir 10:30-Sunday Sch 10:30-Worship	20 4:30 – 9:30 Fencing School	21 10:30-Bible Study 4:30-6:30-Weight Watchers in Aldersgate Hall 4:30-9:30-Fencing Sch	22 4:30-9:30 Fencing School	23 4:30-9:30-Fencing Sch	24	25 9:30-1:30 Fencing Sch. in Gym
26 9:00 – Choir 10:30-Sunday Sch 10:30Worship	27 4:30-9:30-Fencing Sch.	28 10:30-Bible Study 4:30-Weight Watchers In Aldersgate Hall 4:30-9:30-Fencing Sch				